

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LAGOS 04092 130720Z

12

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06

SIL-01 DOTE-00 AID-20 IGA-02 IO-14 AGR-20 SWF-02

DRC-01 /130 W

----- 127888

R 111041Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3981

INFO AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LAGOS 4092

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN RAILWAY CORPORATION FACES RASH OF PROBLEMS

REF: LAGOS 3995

1. DETERIORATING RAIL SITUATION IN NIGERIA OVER PAST EIGHT WEEKS, HIGHLIGHTED BY PROBLEM OF MOVING RELIEF GRAIN TO SAHEL DROUGHT AREA AND THUS DOCUMENTED TO SOME EXTENT IN RECENT CABLE TRAFFIC, HAS BEEN DEALT FURTHER BLOW BY SERIES OF LABOR DIFFICULTIES CULMINATING MAY 6 IN MASSIVE RAIL WORKER'S STRIKE (REFTTEL). THIS MESSAGE ATTEMPTS TO SORT OUT VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF PROBLEM, PROVIDING BACKGROUND INFORMATION INsofar AS IT IS AVAILABLE.

2. LOCOMOTIVE BREAKDOWNS: BREAKDOWNS AMONG RECENTLY-ACQUIRED CANADIAN LOCOMOTIVES (ACQUIRED BY THE NRC IN PHASES BEGINNING NOVEMBER 1972) HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED IN PRESS AND IN REPORTS FROM AID'S TDY PERSONNEL IN NIGERIA. ORIGINALLY NUMBER OF LOCOMOTIVES OUT OF SERVICE WAS REPORTED AT 16. MOST RECENT REPORT SETS NUMBER AT 40 OUT OF 54 NEW LOCOMOTIVES. ALTHOUGH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LAGOS 04092 130720Z

TEAM OF CANADIAN TECHNICIANS HAS BEEN WORKING ON LOCOMOTIVES

SINCE BEGINNING OF APRIL, FULL CAPACITY MAY NOT BE RESTORED BEFORE END OF JUNE.

3. PRIMARILY AS RESULT OF LOCOMOTIVE BREAKDOWNS, MOST OF WHICH APPARENTLY OCCURRED IN MARCH AND EARLY APRIL, RAIL TRAFFIC THROUGHOUT NIGERIA SLOWED DOWN SHARPLY BEGINNING AROUND MIDDLE OF MARCH. EMPTY RAIL CARS AROUND COUNTRY COULD NOT BE MOVED TO AREAS OF HIGH DEMAND. ALTHOUGH NRC HAS TOTAL OF 138 LOCOMOTIVES, ACCORDING TO DEPUTY GEN MGR AJOSE, MANY ARE CHRONICALLY DISABLED AND CORPORATION WAS BANKING ON CANADIAN LOCOMOTIVES TO PROVIDE BACKBONE SUPPORT. SLOWDOWN OF RAIL MOVEMENT WAS MOST PRONOUNCED DURING LATE MARCH AND EARLY APRIL, BUT APPEARED TO PICK UP SOMEWHAT BY LATE APRIL, PRIOR TO MOST RECENT PROBLEMS.

4. RELIEF SHIPMENTS TO SAHEL HAVE NOT BEEN ONLY ACTIVITY ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY SLOWDOWN. IN HEAVY COMPETITION FOR RAIL CARS AMONG COMMERCIAL USERS, MANY HAVE SUFFERED. JUDGING BY PRESS REPORTS, MOST HAVE BEEN SMALLER BUSINESSES, DEALING WITH TRANSPORT OF PERISHABLE FOODSTUFFS; BUT OTHER INDUSTRIES REPORTEDLY AFFECTED IN SERIOUS WAY HAVE INCLUDED INGERIAN COAL CORPORATION, NIGERIAN CEMENT FACTORY (NIGERCEM), AND SMELTING INDUSTRY IN JOS -- LATTER TWO BY VIRTUE THEIR DEPENDENCE ON COAL.

5. DEFECTION OF NRC ENGINEERS: IN MEANTIME, PRESS REPORTS ON MAY 6 ANNOUNCED ACUTE SHORTAGE OF RAILWAY ENGINEERS IN NRC DUE TO "MASS RESIGNATIONS" OVER RECENT MONTHS. DAILY SKETCH ARTICLE REPORTED 24 EXECUTIVE ENGINEERS HAVE RESIGNED IN PREVIOUS MONTH ALONE, DUE TO ALLEGED POOR CONDITIONS OF SERVICE. NRC'S AJOSE DECLINED TO CONFIRM THIS FIGURE, BUT CONCEDED THAT SHORTAGE OF ENGINEERS WAS A PROBLEM IN CARRYING OUT NECESSARY REPAIRS OF LOCOMOTIVES, ROLLING STOCK AND TRACK. TO THAT EXTENT, SHORTAGE HAS AT LEAST AGGRAVATED LOCOMOTIVE BREAKDOWN PROBLEMS CITED ABOVE.

6. RAILWAY AND PORTS TRANSPORT AND CLERICAL STAFF UNION'S STRIKE: STRIKE ACTION REPORTED IN REFTEL ADMINISTERED FURTHER BLOW TO FALTERING RAILWAYS. NRC'S AJOSE CONFIRMED IN MAY 9 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF THAT RAIL MOVEMENT AT TOTAL STANDSTILL AS RESULT OF STRIKE. HE WAS AT THAT TIME HOPEFUL THAT A SOLUTION, LARGELY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LAGOS 04092 130720Z

IN NRC'S FAVOR, WOULD BE WORKED OUT LATER IN DAY IN MEETING WITH MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND UNION OFFICIALS. IT IS OUR INFORMATION THIS MORNING (MAY 10) THAT STRIKERS HAVE INDEED BEEN CALLED BACK TO WORK (SEPTTEL FOLLOWS).

7. BY WAY OF BACKGROUND, AJOSE EXPLAINED THAT ORIGINAL AWARDS WERE MADE AS RESULT OF INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS BY PORT WORKERS, AND THAT RAIL WORKERS REAPED BENEFITS BY VIRTUE OF THEIR COMMON

UNION ASSOCIATION. THIS, HE SAID, GAVE RISE TO "AMBIGUITIES" OF AWARDS AS THEY APPLIED TO RAIL WORKERS AND RESULTED IN CURRENT DISPUTE.

8. COMMENT: CURRENT UNHAPPY STATE OF NIGERIA'S RAILWAYS THUS DUE TO A MULTIPLICITY OF ROOT PROBLEMS AND IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THEY WILL ALL BE SORTED OUT WITHIN NEXT FEW MONTHS. RECENT DRAMATIC DETERIORATION MAY HOWEVER PUSH FMG TO TAKE EXPEDITIOUS ACTION ON CANADIAN (CANAC) CONSULTANTS' REPORT ON RAILWAYS CURRENTLY BEFORE FMG FOR APPROVAL. CANAC STUDY REPORTEDLY MAKES WIDE-RANGING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF RAILWAYS WHICH SHOULD LEND SUPPORT TO NRC'S STANDING REQUEST FOR GREATER CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE FMG.
REINHARDT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RAIL SHIPMENTS, RAILROADS, LABOR STRIKES, FOODS, ROLLING STOCK, GRAINS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LAGOS04092
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740116-0551
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740555/aaaabwsi.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LAGOS 3995
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <11 FEB 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NIGERIAN RAILWAY CORPORATION FACES RASH OF PROBLEMS
TAGS: ETRN, NI, NIGERIAN RAILWAY CORP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005